

REYNE'S CAREER HITS HIGH NOTE

Sultry boy lights up to American solo debut



FLASHBACK . . . JAMES REYNE in Speedos with REBECCA GILLING in the TV mini-series *Return to Eden*.

The press photographer wants James Reyne to lie on his side, head propped up on his arm.

He's after the sullen, sultry look the mega rock star perfected through umpteen dozen press and record cover photo shoots over the years.

Reyne flatly refuses. Seven years at the forefront of popular rock band Australian Crawl and a star role in the television mini-series *Return to Eden* have made him a wary man.

He remembers how a sleazy still shot from *Return to Eden*, showing him as conman Greg Marsden, hair slicked back, clad only in Speedos and reclining in a banana lounge, was continually used to illustrate stories about James Reyne the person.

"But it was the character I played," Reyne said, obviously annoyed at the memory.

"One (newspaper) said underneath it 'who does this guy think he is?'"

Flack

Reyne and the media have always had a love-hate relationship since he and Aussie Crawl burst onto the music scene with their mega-successful debut album *Boys Light Up* in the late 70s.

While the critics usually always loved the music, Reyne himself copped some flack.

Arrogant . . . difficult . . . the descriptions popped up in story after story amid the parts about him being the most beautiful man in rock and roll.

"The media gets a term and they'll hang it on you. All you need is a couple of people to do it and the rest associate you with that. That becomes what you are," said an affable Reyne in Brisbane this week.

"I had a big mouth and I wasn't afraid to use it. I had a microphone and we were popular and I'd mouth off about things because I was there.

"I wish other people would mouth off more, especially when they're in a position to. If you see something and think



The sultry look JAMES REYNE . . . as promoted by the music industry.

By

LYNNETTE CASSELLS

it's wrong, tell people. If you see something that's right say 'that's great.'

"Too many bands are saying 'I hope you really like me. Please like me.'

"If your stuff is good people will like you but you can still give them a bit of stick on the side too."

Arrogant Reyne may or may not be but one thing is for sure — the man is confident.

After Australian Crawl split early in 1986 Reyne headed overseas.

He spent time in the States, travelled through Europe and lived in London with his model girlfriend, all the time trying to secure a foreign recording contract and foreign management.

He scored both. Ex-Aussie Roger Davies (who manages Tina Turner and Olivia Newton John) is now handling Reyne's solo career and the singer has signed with Capital records.

The result is Reyne's debut solo album, a mature collection of songs recorded at four different Los Angeles studios.

The first single, *Fall of Rome*, has just been released in Australia.

"It's a good record, a strong record and all the songs are so different. It's the strongest record I've ever been involved with," Reyne said.

Frustration

"There's depth and flow to it. It's not a disco record. It's a rock and roll record."

Reyne is obviously proud of the fact he achieved both objectives during his foreign foray.

He has always regretted the fact Australian Crawl were not accepted overseas.

"I was frustrated with never being given the chance in America I thought we perhaps could have had because I figure if enough people had seen the band in America it could have worked," he said.

"I think the one thing I did learn in America was that

being the biggest market, the best chance to give yourself is to be with an American record company so you're their responsibility.

"They then spend the money and you're their responsibility. They're more committed.

"I've been in the situation (with Aussie Crawl) where if you're not there in their faces 24 hours a day they forget about you, which is understandable too because they've got 200 other people waiting in the wings.

"I just wanted to give myself a go — a shot at it."

James Reyne, the album, will be released in the States in February and if all goes well a tour will follow.

But most importantly, Reyne said he just wants to improve as a performer.

"That means personal success and that's where you get satisfaction," Reyne said.

Despite his dabbling with acting in the *Return to Eden* mini-series, in which he starred with Rebecca Gilling and Wendy Hughes, Reyne has no long-term screen ambitions.